

Polling Places Checklist

The guidelines contained below pertain to the removal of architectural barriers so a building may be accessible to people with disabilities and people who are elderly. The information does not address every section of the standards, e.g. restrooms, alarm systems, etc. Therefore accessibility is limited rather than full, and if the following guidelines are adhered to it will constitute an accessible building only for the purpose of voting.

 PARKING: Parking spaces should be marked with the universal access symbol. Each should 8 feet wide with an access aisle of 8 feet. They should be located as close as possible to the entrance. If needed, temporary signs can be used to designate accessible spaces. Three regular spaces can be reserved with the middle space serving as an access isle.

 ACCESS: The access path from the parking to the entrance should be a pitch of 1 inch to 20 inches and with no sudden change in grade. It should be a minimum of 3 feet wide. There should be no un-ramped curbs or steps on the route.

 RAMPS: Ramps may be temporary or permanent. In many cases it is most cost effective to build permanent ramps. Ramps should have a pitch of 1 inch in 12 inches with a minimum width of 3 feet. There should be a level platform at top and bottom, of 5 feet by 5 feet. They should have a non-slip surface and when a ramp has a vertical rise of greater than 6 inches, railings are required. Railings should be 32 inches from the ramp surface to the top of the rail. Temporary ramps can be installed if there is a curb or step barrier of 30" or less.

 ENTRANCE DOORS: Doors should have a minimum of clear space of 32 inches when the door is open. This would require a 34 inch door or greater. Door hardware should be able to be operated with a closed fist. If doors are heavy consider temporality removing the closer or propping the door open. Provide a person to assist in opening the door if necessary. Accessible doors should be clearly marked with the universal access symbol. Directions to the accessible entrance should be posted on any inaccessible doors.

 INTERIOR ACCESS: There should be an uninterrupted path with no steps of at least 3 feet wide from the entrance to the voting area. For people who are blind, wall mounted objects, like fire extinguishers, which project into the path of travel more than 4" can be a hazard. Place a plant, trash can or other heavy item below the object.

 PRINT& SIGNAGE: Directional signs should be simple large and in high contrast to the background. Arrows work well and can be understood by everyone. Printed instructions should be provided in at least 18 point type. This will assist people who are deaf as well as people with vision impairments. Handheld magnifying glasses should also be provided.

 VOTING BOOTHS: People who are elderly or use wheelchair may need to sit to vote. A voting machine that can be used, or adjusted for use, in a sitting position or a table with a privacy screen can be utilized. Tables should have a clear knee space of at least 27" underneath. Levers should require very little force to operate so people with limited hand strength can vote. Provisions should be made to offer voters who are blind or have low vision the opportunity to cast a secret ballot. Levers can be marked with braille and large print.

Attached Access Survey